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France

Oilseeds and Products

France Explores Substituting Soybean Meal with Rapeseed Meal

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Report Highlights:

As rapeseed meal production increases, triggered by biodiesel production, the French are studying the impact of increased rape meal percentages in animal feed rations. Research conducted in France recently concluded that replacing soybean meal with rapeseed meal in the feed rations for dairy cows and for fattening beef cattle is technically feasible. The research concluded that the quantity and quality of milk produced by dairy cows fed on rapeseed meal would be higher.

Includes PSD Changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Unscheduled Report
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A national effort to increase biodiesel production is boosting rapeseed production. In France, rapeseed oil is used to make methyl ester, which is blended with diesel fuel. The main by-product is rapeseed meal, which is becoming increasingly available and pushing into the animal feed market.

The conclusions of research on the technical feasibility and impact of replacing soybean meal with rapeseed meal in cattle feed rations were recently presented at the annual congress of the oilseeds industry. The technical institute for oilseeds (CETIOM) and the technical institute for animal breeding (Institut de l'Elevage) conducted this research.

The conclusions are the following:

- In dairy cow feed rations, 1 kilogram of soybean meal can be substituted with 1.5 kilogram of rapeseed meal, with no change in corn silage consumption. With this substitution, milk production increases slightly (by 0.6 Kg per day), milk butterfat content declines (by 1.2 g per Kg of milk) and milk protein content increases slightly (by 0.3 g per kg of milk).
- In feed rations for fattening young bulls, 0.7 to 1 kg of soybean meal can be replaced with 1 to 1.7 Kg of rapeseed meal, with lower corn silage and grain consumption. These changes do not impact carcass weight or quality.

In France, soybean meal and rapeseed meal consumption for animal feed were 4.75 million MT and 1.03 million MT in MY 2003/04, respectively. In 2004/05, soybean meal consumption is estimated to decline to 4.15 million MT, while rapeseed meal consumption is seen going up to 1.22 million MT.

Soybean meal continues to be a major ingredient in the feed rations for poultry, swine, dairy cows, and beef cattle, as it usually represents 15 to 23 percent of the ration. Rapeseed meal has been used in lower percentages (8 to 20 percent) for swine, dairy cows and beef cattle.